DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 028 113 SP 002 218

By-Allen, Dwight W.; Sinclair, Robert L.

The Center for Study of Educational Innovations: A Statement of Intent; Current and Future Projects.

Massachusetts Univ., Amherst. School of Education.
Pub Date 68
Note-11p.
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.65
Descriptors-Educational Change, Educational Environment, *Educational Innovation, *Educational Research, Inservice Teacher Education, Intelligence, Internship Programs, Program Descriptions, *Research and Development Centers, Rural Schools
Identifiers-Center for Study of Educational Innovations, CSEI

The Center for Study of Educational Innovations (CSEI), University of Massachusetts, through working relationships with different types of field testing schools, will experiment with research, development, and implementation in four areas: institutional structures, curriculum development, instructional strategies, and teacher education. High priority objectives are to develop and test research innovation paradigms that will identify needed changes in schooling, assess the effectiveness of selected educational innovations, devise and implement new institutional structures which make optimal use of individual differences among professional personnel, construct and test innovative curriculum materials, and develop strategies and techniques for implementing innovations. The organizational pattern of the Center is designed to allow unrestricted movement and communication among the three units of activity: conceptualization, research and evaluation, and diffusion. (Appended are brief descriptions of current and future projects which include a rural schools project; a series of inservice workshops and internships; and funded activities including projects to train school evaluators and to measure selected variables in elementary school environment related to intelligence.) (JS)

ED028113

THE CENTER FOR STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS: A STATEMENT OF INTENT

By *

Dwight W. Allen

Robert L. Sinclair

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

The Center for Study of Educational Innovations (CSEI) is concerned with systematic inquiry into educational change and school improvement. Observations of the conditions and activities characterizing educational institutions today suggest that there are far too many schools either unaware or uninformed of current, tested, innovative practices. It is also clear that there are many institutions moving precipitately into "innovation" because it is fashionable. An examination of public education reveals that even the less threatening changes in schooling are often misrepresented and are usually blunted on the classroom door. The importance of recognizing individual differences among children, for example, is central to rational curriculum development and to effective instruction. However, few schools in the United States generate educational environments designed to complement human variability among students. A center interested in aggressively pursuing the advancement and strategic diffusion of knowledge in educational innovations is needed to foster the development of innovative alternatives.

The Center will develop new research models for education which institutionalize the process of change. The processes of research and development will support each other. Educational research must be designed to evaluate innovation, while at the same time suggest new educational practices that should be field tested. Similarly, innovation must take its directions from ongoing research and suggest new areas for study. The Center will make

SP002218

* The total Center staff contributed to this statement of intent. Special thanks go to Mike De Bloois and Jim Smith for their assistance.

a concerted effort to devise institutional structures, curricula, instructional strategies, and teacher education procedures that capitalize on such interaction between research and innovation.

The Center, through working relationships with different types of field testing schools will identify problems in education, formulate possible solutions, design strategies and techniques for implementation, analyze selected processes of change, and interpret any accumulated evidence. The generation of this knowledge and expertise is necessarily based upon a sound understanding of (1) the current state of schooling, (2) the variety of relevant innovations, and (3) the alternative strategies and techniques for implementation. At the outset CSEI will assume the function of facilitating diagnosis because so little is known about the degree and kind of involvement essential to effective implementation of innovation. As data are accumulated on tested hypotheses, the role and function of the Center will become more perscriptive in emphasis. In other words, CSEI will record and analyze data accumulated from hypotheses tested in actual school settings, thereby obtaining additional data on the multitude of forces and pressures which have relevance to the acceptance of innovations.

Finally, on a long term basis, the Center must of necessity be concerned with success and failure. One major thrust must be towards the identification and understanding of cause and effect relationships. Fear of failure and the bogey of experimental research have far too long delayed implementation of innovative practice and consequently the attainment of the necessary knowledge and expertise essential in facilitating educational improvement and understanding education change.

A study of educational innovation is both needed and long overdue. CSEI will experiment with research, development, and implementation in four

compelling areas:

1) Institutional structures
2) Curriculum development
3) Instructional strategies
4) Teacher education

OBJECTIVES

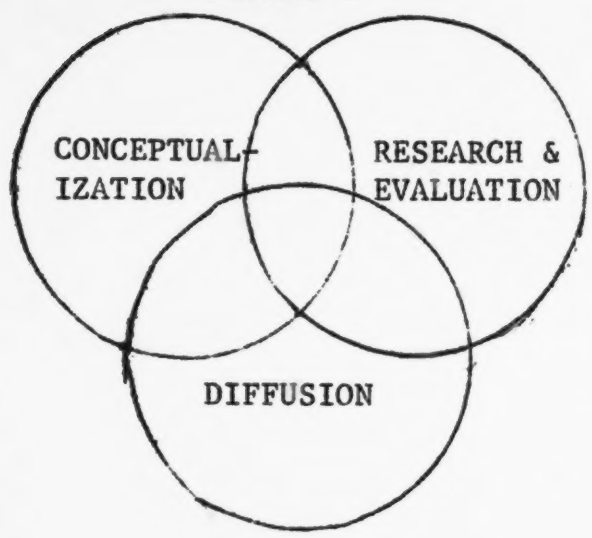
The high priority objectives of the Center will be:

1) To develop and test research - innovation paradigms that will identify needed changes in schooling.
2) To assess the effectiveness of selected educational innovations.
3) To devise and implement new institutional structures which make optimal use of individual differences among professional personnel.
4) To construct and test innovative curriculum materials.
5) To develop strategies and techniques for implementing innovations.

ORGANIZATION

The objectives of the Center can best be realized by an organizational pattern that has three complementing yet autonomous areas of concern.

FIGURE 1



In Figure 1, these dimensions are illustrated as three interlocking spheres. One represents conceptualization, another research and evaluation and the third depicts an element for diffusion. Within this structure there exists no internal divisions, thus allowing

participants unrestricted movement and communication among the units of activity. A general description of each unit follows:

Conceptualization - A group of individuals within the Center continually conceptualize the directions of individual projects and determine the best allocation of energies and resources. This unit serves as a place for inquiry and exploration unattached from the ongoing activities of CSEI. In this way it is possible for individuals and small groups to pursue pet ideas or to investigate knowledge generated by a project. The existence of a conceptualization unit insures an outlet for creativity and provides a breath of fresh air for current and future Center endeavors.

The conceptualization unit has a function of determining the nature of existing innovations in school organization, curriculum development, instructional strategies, and teacher education. Knowledge of the status of innovations provides the Center with a necessary awareness of the trends and problems characteristic of the field. Such data are necessary to keep Center activities relevant and to generate new projects. The conceptualization unit then provides for curiosity, investigation and exchange of ideas and opinions--creative efforts necessary for a salient organization.

Research and Evaluation - This unit is devoted to studying and improving the evaluation of selected innovations. The research evaluation unit will clarify the process of evaluating innovations by formulating appropriate theory; identify, measure, and study variables relevant to the evaluation of selected innovations; and develop and field test systems for evaluating programs and institutions. Also, attention is given to multiple consequences produced by a particular innovation interacting with elements of the total school enterprise.

Hypotheses about strategies and techniques for implementing educational change will be investigated by the research and evaluation unit. Also, this

group will determine whether strategies and techniques for fostering change are sufficiently developed for dissemination to a wider audience.

Diffusion - This unit of the Center is responsible for informing educators of current, clinicly-tested innovations. The dissemination of such information will be followed up with strategies and techniques designed to help public schools accept and implement innovations. Further, the diffusion unit formulates practical solutions to problems existing in schools, makes innovations understandable to the practioner, and provides back-up services to schools that are in the process of adapting innovations. The creation of strategies and techniques for implementing innovations in schools that have diversified demographic features and unique educational settings is a major priority of this unit.

CSEI wants to avoid rigidty and be freed from the paraphenalia of conventional bureaucratic structure. Some organizational models, with their chartered lines of authority and restrictive domaines of influence frequently do real harm to the life of the young institution they were designed to help. The Center's three dimensional organization however, generates a healthy institutional environment. The organization is built on an organic structure which facilitates free communication between every unit of the Center. In all phases of involvement, knowledge about innovative practices must be current. Yet avenues for an exchange of ideas and opinions must constantly remain open if a climate where individuals can thrive and remain productive is to be established. It is likely that the unique organizational structure of CSEI will result in fluid internal communication, and will provide the action necessary to make the major objectives of the Center a reality.

December 4, 1968

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS; CURRENT AND FUTURE PROJECTS

Robert Sinclair

This memorandum provides a general description of the movement and status of the Center for Study of Educational Innovations. The intention here is not to provide an inclusive report of all projects and plans. Rather, the purpose is to describe a sample of activities that represent the thrusts of CSEI. Following is an outline of some priority concerns:

I. RURAL SCHOOLS PROJECT - Twelve staff members are now in close contact with teachers and administrators in six rural schools. The purposes of this project are to 1) identify problems of rural schooling, 2) determine difficulties in entering a system as an outside agent; and 3) initiate dialogue on innovations in curriculum, school organization and instruction. This project also provices a practical field setting for exposing Center staff to problems involved in the initiation of change. Peter Quinn and Ash Hartwell are coordinating this project.

II. INSERVICE PROJECT - The current survey of inservice needs, directed by Rich Holzman, will provide the base of CSEI inservice projects. Further, the results of this survey will be distributed to key persons and agencies throughout the State.

The inservice workshops of the Center will be held in the School of Education and in strategic regional locations. The intention here is to extend ideas to the schools by actually taking inservice to the teachers and administrators. Following are brief descriptions of two, of many, workshops now being planned.

SP 002 218

1. Individualized Instruction - This two day conference is centered on teachers who desire information about the direction and techniques for individualizing. Conference participants will experience the impact and results of individualization as they make their own choices and engage in discussions, demonstrations, and personal encounters which are tailor-made to match individual expectations. Carl Hoagland and Jim Smith will coordinate this workshop.

2. Internship in Leadership and Innovations - This intense five week institute will expose teachers, administrators, and supervisors to leadership techniques and decision-making procedures that foster the implementation of innovations. Further, participants will be informed of current trends and practices in educational innovations. All this will be approached in the very real setting of the University Laboratory School. The internship will be limited to 100 educators from Massachusetts and across the United States. Bob Sinclair and Dick Clark will direct this internship program. Also, about ten other members of the Center staff will work in the planning and implementation of the internship.

III. FUNDED ACTIVITIES - At present, three major projects are being developed for support from outside agencies. These projects are designed so that it is possible to put them into action with or without funds. Financial support, of course, would provide more inclusive and intense programs. The projects are:

1. School Evaluators - This proposal initiates the training and placement of evaluators. Such educators are skilled in defining performance criteria, creating evaluative instruments, and interpreting outcomes of assessment. The evaluators will be placed in near-by

school systems to assist with the development of new programs and the assessment of existing programs. Jim Fortune is the originator and coordinator of this proposed project. Funds are requested from USOE.

2. Leaders for School Improvement and Change - Starting in September, 1969, a graduate program designed to prepare educational leaders will be initiated at the University of Massachusetts. The program will provide a set of educational experiences dramatically different from those currently offered in schools of education to capable individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds both in and outside of education. By approaching leadership concepts and skills inductively, programs will include:

- intensive early involvement with a series of cases studied designed to raise questions about change processes in educational organizations. Cases will force participants to analyze client systems, to develop change models and theories, and to become intimately acquainted with a wide sample of current and potential change goals.

- participation as a member-observer on a CSEI consultation team which is attempting to effect change in a school system. This participation will include a critical analysis, to be presented as a case study to program colleagues.

- joining a team of program colleagues to design a change strategy for a school district. At least two teams will plan independently for each requesting school district. The district will evaluate the two or more plans and select and pay for one to be implemented, dollars to go to the developing team.

- developing, transmitting, and funding a proposal for an educational organization.

- participation with salary, for at least one year, as an educational consultant with the CSEI or Educational Coordinates. In this context, the participant will complete all program requirements including the dissertation.

- a team placement effort, where a program graduate and a business or curriculum manager of the graduate's choice are placed in a position of educational leadership.

Before the first year of program operation, efforts will be made to recruit student talent from the following "mix":

20% undergraduates who have shown leadership talent
10% college drop-outs who have imagination
30% "great" teachers with 1-6 years of experience
20% school principals, ambitious and change oriented
20% school superintendents ready to move.

Such diversity of prespectives should maximize the potential of the case-study core of the leadership training program. Art Eve and Dick Clark will coordinate this proposed project. Funds will be requested from Ford Foundation and cooperating school systems.

3. Elementary School Educational Environment: Measurement of Selected Variables of Environmental Press Related to Intelligence.

The major purpose of this study is to describe the diversity and similarity of educational environments in selected elementary schools. The investigator seeks to identify the educational environment of each of several schools and to analyze particular differences and patterns of commonality existing among schools in the sample. Further, the study will relate the assessment of educational environment to the characteristic of measured student intelligence. The hypotheses of the study are:

1. There are differences in educational environment among the designated elementary schools when they are measured by the selected variables.
2. There are patterns in educational environment common to the designated elementary schools when they are measured by the selected variables.
3. There are significant correlations between environmental measures and the characteristic of intelligence.

Five environmental variables are selected for investigation. They are termed Practicality, Community, Awareness, Propriety, and Scholarship. Collective perceptions of fifth and sixth grade students toward these selected variables are used as a source for describing the school atmospheres. The student scores on standard intelligence tests will serve as data for measured intelligence.

The data for accepting or rejecting the stated hypotheses will be gathered in about 60 diversified elementary schools clustered geographically in Western Massachusetts. The Elementary School Environment Survey instrument consisting of 100 statements about elementary school conditions, processes and activities will be developed and refined to obtain a measure of student perceptions of the educational environment existing in the sampled schools. The instrument will be administered to over 12,000 students from more than 400 fifth and sixth grade classrooms. Additional data on intelligence will be obtained from the student records in the designated schools.

The proposed investigation then will be concerned with describing differences and similarities in educational atmosphere and with relating data on school environments to test data for student intelligence. It can then be determined if different environmental conditions have varied relationships to measured intelligence. Because it would be possible to suggest how varied educational environments foster intelligence, the findings should have a number of important implications for theory, research and practice.

IV. NETWORK OF COOPERATING SCHOOLS - The Center's present, proposed and future projects demand continued involvement with a group of field-testing schools. A high priority of CSEI, therefore, will be to develop a network of

cooperating schools. Participating schools, both elementary and secondary, will have very different demographic characteristics, pupil populations, physical plants, and educational problems. Because of the comprehensive representation of these schools, there is better opportunity to determine the feasibility of innovations and to generalize research findings.

The Center has contacted 53 school systems surrounding the University of Massachusetts in connection with the development of the Network of Cooperating Schools (NCS). School systems will be invited to apply for membership to NCS, and about twenty elementary schools and twenty secondary schools will be accepted to the program. By joining the mutual interests and collaborating resources of participating schools and the Center for Study of Educational Innovations, it will be possible to promote improvement and change in education.

V. Finally, a number of educational opportunities in the form of courses and non-courses will be offered by CSEI. They will include:

* Dynamics of Educational Change
* Education and Leadership
* The Dynamics of Human Groups

  The Self-renewing Educational Institution
* The Changing Role of the Principal

  Basic Principles in Curriculum and Instruction
* Seminar in Curriculum Theory
* Evaluation of School Programs
* Criteria and Processes in Research
* Innovations in Education
* Inquiry (a series of experiences planned and conducted by students)
* Include a strong emphasis on action involvement in schools or related Institutions.